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## **SHELBY COUNTY'S OLD SALEM CEMETERY ADDED TO ALABAMA HISTORIC CEMETERY REGISTER**

The Alabama Historical Commission recently added Old Salem Cemetery located north of Montevallo to the Alabama Historic Cemetery Register.

"The cemetery register is a prestigious listing of historic cemeteries in Alabama," said Lee Anne Wofford, cemetery program coordinator. "The AHC considers the notable historic cemeteries in this register to be particularly worthy of preservation and appreciation, and therefore deserving of this special recognition."

There are now fourteen cemeteries in Shelby County on the Alabama Historic Cemetery Register, which features 237 cemeteries statewide.

Old Salem Cemetery is the final resting place for some of Shelby County's oldest pioneer families. While the earliest grave markers found in the cemetery date to the 1830s, there may be earlier unmarked burials since the surrounding area was opened up to permanent settlement as early as 1815. The earliest graves may have had simple stone markers or none at all. Unfortunately, many of the original grave markers documented in a 1930s Works Progress Administration (WPA) survey of the cemetery have been removed. Some surnames found in the cemetery include Bearden, Bradford, Cunningham, Harrison, Lovelady, McHenry, McGaughy and McMath.

The Alabama Historical Commission administers the Alabama Historic Cemetery Program that gives aid to the general public, government officials, civic groups, and others in identifying, documenting, registering, and conserving Alabama's historic cemeteries.

The Alabama Historic Cemetery Register officially recognizes and honors family and community cemeteries that were established at least 40 years ago.

Listing in the state cemetery register is an honorary designation imposing no restrictions on property owners. State law protects all cemeteries from willful desecration and destruction.

*To protect, preserve, and interpret Alabama's historic places is the mission of the Alabama Historical Commission, Alabama's state agency for historic preservation.*